

Monaco has come under fire in recent years for neglect in investigating cases of suspected money laundering. However, in 2014, Monaco's general prosecutor launched a preliminary investigation into a case involving the French bank BNP Paribas and an alleged money laundering network of several African countries.

Political Rights and Civil Liberties:

Political Rights: 31 / 40 [Key]

A. Electoral Process: 10 / 12

Monaco is a principality governed as a constitutional monarchy. Only the prince, who serves as head of state, may initiate legislation and change the government, though all legislation and the budget require the approval of the Conseil National. Prince Albert II took the throne after his father's death in 2005. No constitutional provisions allow citizens to change the monarchical structure of government.

The 24 members of the unicameral Conseil National are elected for five-year terms; 16 are chosen through a majority electoral system and 8 by proportional representation. Horizon Monaco, the conservative former opposition, won the general election in February 2013. The former ruling party, Union Monegasque, dropped from 21 seats to only 3, and Renaissance claimed the remaining seat. Laurent Nouvion of Horizon Monaco became president of the Conseil National, and Christophe Steiner became vice president. Voter turnout was approximately 75 percent.

The head of government, known as the minister of state, is traditionally appointed by the monarch from a candidate list of three French nationals submitted by the French government. The current minister of state, Michel Roger, has held the post since March 2010. The monarch also appoints five other ministers who comprise the cabinet.

B. Political Pluralism and Participation: 11 / 16

Monaco's political system is constructed of political associations, led by Horizon Monaco and Union Monegasque. Renaissance, the new association that first competed in the general election in 2013, was established by Monaco's largest hotel and casino company, SBM, along with trade union members.

Monaco's law on campaign finance was adopted in 2012 in response to the recommendations of Group of States against Corruption (GRECO). Changes included a €400,000 (\$526,000) limit on campaign expenditures.

The constitution differentiates between the rights of Monegasque nationals and those of noncitizens. Only about 8,000 of the principality's residents are citizens, and they alone may elect the Conseil National. Citizens also benefit from free education, unemployment assistance, and the ability to hold elective office.

C. Functioning of Government: 10 / 12

Inadequate financial record keeping has traditionally made the country's level of corruption difficult to measure.

In March 2013, senior official Jean-Sébastien Fiorucci and former Conseil National president Jean-François Robillon were charged for involvement in a 2012 polling scandal in which the privacy of Monegasque citizens was compromised when a French-based polling company sought information about people's opinions of candidates in Monaco's election. Both men were found guilty in July 2014 and were each required to pay a €2,500 (\$3,300) fine.

In 2009, the principality started providing foreign tax authorities with information on accounts held by noncitizens, and by October of that year, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) removed Monaco from its list of uncooperative tax havens.

In February 2014, the General Prosecutor Jean-Pierre Dréno launched a preliminary investigation into BNP Paribas after a French nongovernmental organization (NGO) raised concerns over an alleged money laundering network between Monaco and several African countries, including Madagascar, Gabon, Senegal, and Burkina Faso.

Civil Liberties: 57 / 60

D. Freedom of Expression and Belief: 16 / 16

The constitution provides for the freedoms of speech and the press, although insulting the ruling family is prohibited. There is a weekly government newspaper, an English-language monthly, and foreign and online newspapers that cover Monaco. Monaco Channel is the only local television channel.

In March 2014, the Fairmont Monte Carlo hotel sued a former employee for defamation, asking for €30,000 in damages for a 2010 campaign in which he wrote to news outlets and blogs, as well as to Prince Albert II, about poor work conditions in the hotel.

The constitution guarantees freedom of worship, though Roman Catholicism is the state religion. There are no laws against proselytizing by formally registered religious organizations, but authorities strongly discourage proselytizing in public. Academic freedom is not restricted. The country's only institution of higher education, the private International University of Monaco, offers graduate and undergraduate programs in business administration, finance, and related fields. Monegasque students may attend French colleges and universities under various agreements between the two countries.

E. Associational and Organizational Rights: 12 / 12

The constitution provides for freedom of assembly, which is generally respected in practice. No restrictions are imposed on the formation of NGOs.

Workers have the legal right to organize and bargain collectively, although they rarely do so. All workers except state employees have the right to strike. Two trade unions operate in the country. On January 8, 2014, the staff of Hotel de Paris in Monaco ended a nine-day strike, the longest in Monegasque history.

The strikers had grievances over the question of wages during the hotel's planned four-year renovation.

F. Rule of Law: 15 / 16

The legal rights to a fair public trial and an independent judiciary are generally respected. The justice system is based on the French legal code, and under the constitution, the prince delegates his judicial powers to the courts. The prince names five full members and two judicial assistants to the Supreme Court based on nominations by the Conseil National and other government bodies. Jail facilities generally meet international standards. After sentencing, non-Monegasque inmates are often transferred to French prisons.

G. Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights: 14 / 16

Property rights are respected. Noncitizens holding a residence permit may purchase property and open businesses.

Women generally receive equal pay for equal work. There are five women in the Conseil National and two in the Crown Council. Abortion is legal only under special circumstances, including rape. Monaco does not recognize same-sex unions or marriages.

Scoring Key: X / Y (Z)

X = Score Received

Y = Best Possible Score

Z = Change from Previous Year

[Full Methodology](#)